

Cyber Bullying

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this issue

What about cyber bullying P1
How can you help P2

Words Leave Scars

No one likes you. You are a waste of space. You are stupid, ugly, and fat. Do these words seem harmful to you? Okay, now what about a teenager trying to fit in? Nobody likes to be insulted, and especially not while they are trying to enjoy social experiences online or through cell phones. This is just a brief example of cyber bullying.

Stopcyberbullying.org gives us the perfect definition. They state "Cyberbullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones." Some may say that's just kids being kids, but if you were to see the side effects of this you would think otherwise. So let's discuss it.

Stop and think about the emotional damage it could cause. With this much emotional damage it may cause depression which may lead to suicide. Things like harming themselves or even others may come because of cyber bullying.

Direct Attacks

A direct attack is when a person harms, harasses, or embarrasses another through technology. They can use such things: Instant messaging, stealing passwords. Blogs, web sites, sending pictures, internet polling, interactive gaming, sending porn and other junk mail, and impersonation

Cyber Bullying By Proxy

Cyber bullying by proxy is when one child gets another to do their dirty work.

This usually starts with one child hacking into another's account.

Example: Jenny and Sharron got in a fight. Jenny hacks onto Sharron's Facebook and posts, "I hate Jenny. She is fat, ugly, and stupid. Nobody should be her friend."



What Can We Do?

Cyber Bullying is not a joke. Children and adults need to be aware of the effects it can have on people. There are three things that children can do, and three things that parents can do.

Three things children can do are: be aware of others feelings, encourage others to be nice while on the internet or texting, and be heard!

Be cautious of what you are saying or doing on the internet. Even though you may think it is a joke others may be offended. Think of others.

If you see others cyber bullying online do not just sit back and let it happen. Report it!

Also, cyber bullying can result in unwanted consequences. This may include things like getting your account privileges revoked, even getting your school computer privileges revoked. Refer to, "What is the Law?" to learn more.

Parents! Be willing to listen to your children about cyber bullying, but do not react! If children tell you what names they have been called try not to react. Reacting to these words may make them feel as though it is worse than it really is.

Help them to feel comfortable talking to you about these issues, and see that they are taken care of appropriately.



What is the Law?

This checklist may be used to determine how bad the cyber bullying is.

- ✓ What kind of threat? These may include using lewd language, direct insults, physical threats, and serious threats (there is a bomb in the school.
- ✓ Frequency. How often is this happening
- ✓ Source. Do you know who it is that is doing this or is the source unknown?
- ✓ Nature of the threats. How are these threats being delivered?

Think about the severity of these things and take action. Some may need law enforcement involved, but others may be dealt with personally or through the ISP